TO THE ABOLITIONISTS OF MASSACHUSETTS.

BRETHREN:

The Quarterly meeting of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society will be holden at Boston, on TUESDAY, the 26th day of March, instant. The Board of Managers call earnestly on all county and town societies to send delegates to this meeting. The important questions to come before it make a full representation of the whole State necessary. The position assumed by the American Anti-Slavery Society in relation to our own, demands an instant and clear expression of the opinion of the Commonwealth.

The Executive Committee at New York, against our repeated advice and earnest protest, have virtually assumed the management of financial affairs within the State. This power necessarily includes the appointment of agents and the control of publications. It is in fact the exclusive control of the cause. The question, then, which Massachusetts is called to answer, is briefly this,—shall we entrust the whole guidance of our enterprise to a dozen individuals? Monopoly of power is always dangerous, in this cause peculiarly so, arrayed as we are against all classes and interests, and where a single misstep entails such disastrous consequences.

Hitherto, if Ohio had gone wrong, her sister States were at hand, holding up the standard and keeping the beacon-fire bright and unchanging, to win her back to duty and union. If Massachusetts, blinded or deceived, had faltered, the weakness or indecision would have spread only over a single State. But let the State societies be suspended,—entrust exclusive power to a committee at New York—and one mistake is ruin—and not to one State only, but the whole cause. Let the trumpet there once give an uncertain sound, let one heart waver, the whole host is broken up—the march of the whole arrested. With no distrust of the individuals composing the committee, it is the system we deprecate.

We are unwilling to believe that the men and women of the Commonwealth are ready thus to peril our holy enterprize. We have protested in your name against the course of the Parent Society; but in a crisis so peculiar, the free voice of Massachusetts—the whole State—must support that protest, or it avails nothing.

If we are wrong—if you are ready to surrender the responsibility and place yourselves and the slave in the hands of a few individuals—then it becomes us to ask, of what use is the cumbrous machinery of a state organization, and whether it would not be better to dissolve the Massachusetts Society and let those who assume the whole power bear also the burden and responsibility of the cause?

The decision of this question is doubly important *now* in consequence of the approaching anniversary of the Am. Society for the instruction of which the voice of Massachusetts should be distinctly heard.

FRANCIS JACKSON, President.

W. PHILLIPS, Rec. Sec'y pro tem.

Dear Debora,

a package of handbills for calling a meeting of the N Bedford County have been sent to John French. Do follow them up with your personal labours, & see to it that 5 important particulars are attended to at the meeting. 1st an expression of opinion against the New York brethren's course. 2ond against

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the new paper as part & parcel of the same movement. 3d recommendation of the Newest paper as an auxiliary to those who cannot afford the Liberator

4th recent proceedings of the Legislature —

5th Delegation to the Quarterly Mass. Meeting. Let it be large. very large — Let every thing that hath breath speak. Throw up in full strength. Great preparations are making for the entertainment of the delegates free of expense. Let it be so stated in the meeting. Let it also be proclaimed that money cannot be better expended in the cause at this crisis than in the pay't of travelling expenses.

Let the resolution about the N York business run thus. Resolved that "we are surprised & pained ~~highly disapprove & censure the rash~~ at the rash, unkind & unbrotherly course taken by the ex. com. of the Am. Soc." I most heartily approve & sustain the spirited & judicious course of the Mass.

What I have italicised is an extract from a letter of Gerrit Smith to myself. He adds — "the temper of the address of the Mass board is good." Anna is at Weymouth. So is little

Henry. We have sent in a petition on the colour-question. Bradburn tells me our names are to be printed. May is in town — Shilly Shally. — I wish he could but believe men will sometimes lie. Dear bro. Collins is invaluable. He is the gen'l agent. No news that I can learn. Mr Stone wants to meet Garrison. Which I am going to bring about by inviting them together.

See to all my fine friends.

Yours faithfully

Maria W. Chapman

Friday March 14th 1835

M. W. Chapman
March 14th 1839

BOSTON
MAR
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MAS

Miss Debora Weston
Care of James Howland Esq
New Bedford
Mass

Ms. A. 9.2.11.58